

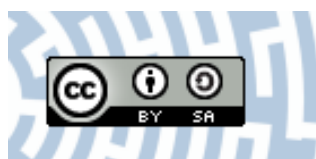


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The Roma Genocide The Roma Pariahs before, during, and after the Second World War

ABSTRACT: The term “pariah” was used by Max Weber in his *Ancient Judaism* (published originally in the years 1917–1919) to describe the Jewish nation which, as he maintained, was “separated, formally or *de facto*, from their social surroundings.” Inspired by Weber’s work, Hannah Arendt was the first to expand this concept to include the Roma people, albeit unwittingly. In the light of Arendt’s essay “The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition,” the pariah is a “suspect” treated in accordance with the rules of an investigation, examination, or inspection. Constantly watched, spied on, or kept under surveillance, the pariah becomes hyper-visible. The Roma pariahs have been immersed in the “ecology of fear” for ages. Never immune to accusations such as theft or fraud, they have always been construed as the criminogenic element of the society. The “suspicion” would all too easily turn into “prevention,” which would frequently take very radical forms. However, it was only in 1987 that the book *The Pariah Syndrome: An Account of Gypsy Slavery and Persecution* by Ian Hancock cast light directly onto the Roma pariah. The figure of the pariah helps to reveal the essence of the uniqueness of Porajmos – the Roma genocide as a genocide parallel to the Shoah, yet driven by different causes, proceeding along a different course, and burdened with different consequences. One of these consequences was the fact that in the post-war period the extermination of the Roma gradually sank into oblivion and, thereby, into invisibility.

KEYWORDS: the Roma Genocide, Porajmos, the Roma people, pariah, unsettlement

The figure of the pariah helps to shed light on the uniqueness of the Roma Holocaust as a genocide parallel to the Shoah, yet motivated by different causes, proceeding along a different course, and triggering different consequences, of which one was the fact that in the post-war period, the extermination of the Roma gradually sank into oblivion and, thereby, into invisibility.

Max Weber first employs the term “pariah” in his “Ancient Judaism,” published originally in the 1917–1919 issues of the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialforschung*. He uses the concept to describe the Jewish nation as a nation of people who – as he argues in his work – were “separated, formally or *de facto*, from their social surroundings.”¹ Whether intentionally or not, inspired by this Weberian figure, Hannah Arendt becomes the first to expand this notion to also include the Roma. In her essay “The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition,” Arendt presents the fates of the emancipated European Jews in terms of a dialectical interplay of two positions: that of a “pariah” (a social outcast, an unsettled Other, a person in exile, a man “in-between,” whose identity is socially dysfunctional) and that of a “parvenu” (who believes in the “treacherous [...] promise of equality which assimilation has held out”²). While elaborating on this dynamics, the author indicates four other types – figures of the Jewish nation: the *schlemihl* from Heinrich Heine’s poetry, Bernard Lazare’s *conscious pariah*, the Kafkian vision of the fate of *the man of goodwill*, and Charles Chaplin’s portrayal of *the suspect*. She describes the life of the suspect thus:

On the one hand, [experience] had taught him the traditional Jewish fear of the “cop” – that seeming incarnation of a hostile world; but on the other, it had taught him the time-honored Jewish truth that [...] the human ingenuity of a David can sometimes outmatch the animal strength of a Goliath. [...] It is a worried, careworn impudence [...], the effrontery of the poor “little Yid” who does not recognize the class order of the world because he sees in it neither order nor justice for himself.³

One could argue that each subsequent element of Arendt’s analysis of the portrait of the suspect sketched in Chaplin’s films, including the one quoted above, fits the fates of the Roma people in Europe much better than it does any of the “types” of Jewish fates. Arendt’s essay was published in 1944, but the writer had already been aware of the Romani roots of the actor, which she emphasizes in the footnote: “Chaplin has recently declared that he is of Irish and Gypsy descent, but he has been selected for discussion because, even if not himself a Jew, he has epitomized in an artistic form a character born of the Jewish pariah mentality.”⁴

¹ M. WEBER: *Ancient Judaism*. Trans. and ed. H.H. GERTH, D. MARTINDALE. London 1952, p. 3.

² H. ARENDT: “The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition.” *Jewish Social Studies* 1944 (Apr.), vol. 6, no. 2, p. 100.

³ Ibidem, pp. 111–112.

⁴ Ibidem, p. 101. On numerous occasions, Chaplin would be attributed a variety of descents: not only Jewish, but also Russian, French, and English. Ultimately, all these biographical legends were proven false in the course of the investigation that senator Joseph McCarthy commissioned to the British intelligence in the 1950s.

This statement, however, seems to call for a dispute. Admittedly, the pariah-Jew and the pariah-Roma, both alien and unsettled (as “stateless” arrivals), are similarly intertwined with the structure of the European societies. Yet, although the experiences of both these ethnoses come close to each other, they are not entirely identical. What Arendt fails to account for is the fact that in his films Chaplin may have attempted the description of the life of a non-Jewish, albeit almost exactly alike, Romani pariah. *Almost*, however, makes a substantial difference. Therefore, while analyzing Arendt’s essay, it is worthwhile to effect such a substitution: in a thus oriented reading, her observations concerning the character of Chaplin’s Tramp turn out to be surprisingly accurate when applied to the Roma people.

If we imagine the Roma-themed version of the minstrel show *blackface*, that is, the *Romaface*, in our mind’s eye we will see none other, but the Chaplinian protagonist: the blackened eye contour, lush, untamed, unkempt curls (evoking the “shagginess” traditionally attributed to the Roma), characteristic clothing – threadbare and dirty, but simultaneously a kind of a festive attire, which makes it a parody of the bourgeois elegance of the gone-by era. The Tramp is a *homo viator*, a *flâneur*, a vagabond, an urban vagrant. Even in the age of sound he does not speak. He is voiceless, or uses a language that others find “incomprehensible”: his is an alien, unfamiliar idiom beyond the possibility of recognition. Adopting his *Romaface* persona, Chaplin enacts a variety of characters, all of whom experience different adventures, have distinct pasts and separate futures. Collectively, however, they make up a unique type, or metaphor. The Tramp is sentimental and deeply humane, proud and, at times, grandiose. Yet, at the same time, he is utterly amoral: he steals, he cheats, he mocks religion – he does whatever it takes to survive. He is clever, cunning, agile, and charming; he fools around with the authority and toys with the rich, he trifles with the society and does all that playing solely by his own rules. As Aleksander Wat wrote about him in 1924, “Chaplin epitomizes the fight against the law, consistent and ruthless. Chaplin ignores the law; he does not take notice of it. He is a perfect anarchist.”⁵ Unlike Arendt would have it, however, the Tramp’s cleverness is not David’s cunning. Rather, it is the dexterity of the Roma, which, according to the Romani ethno-stereotype, was supposedly motivated with his laziness (among others). Still, his artifice would also serve as a means to trick the local satrap, which would win him the admiration of the settled community, as is reflected in numerous literary texts, folk anecdotes, yarns, and tales.⁶ In the Polish language, the noun

⁵ A. WAT: “Charlie Chaplin. Pamflet czy omlet?” *Awangarda* 1924, no. 1, p. 2; Cf. P. STROŻEK: “Chaplinada w kręgach lewicy literackiej i artystycznej lat 20.” *Kwartalnik Filmowy* 2015 (spring–summer), no. 89–90, p. 206.

⁶ See, for instance, D. EPSTEIN NORD: *Gypsies and the British Imagination, 1807–1930*. New York 2006; R. POWELL: “Understanding the Stigmatization of Gypsies: Power and the Dialectics of (Dis)identification.” *Housing, Theory and Society* 2008, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 87–109, DOI:

Cygan ('Gypsy') motivates the verb *cyganić*, which means 'to cheat', 'to lie', 'to trick someone'. In Samuel Bogumił Linde's dictionary of the Polish language (published in Warsaw in the years 1807–1814), one finds the following definition "cyganić – oszukiwać jak Cygan ['to cheat like a Gypsy'], w pole wywodzić, matać, wikłać, kręcić. Cyganić – oszwabić, drwić, okpić."⁷

Chaplin's protagonist is a man surviving on the margins of the society. Like in his 1936 silent masterpiece *Modern Times*, he is either "a cog in a machine" or "the sand in the cogs," the latter of which the modern state can neither afford, nor tolerate. What the ideas and institutions of modernity had in common was the dimension of particularity: a dimension which reinforced the sense of cultural differences within modern societies – and therefore a dimension perhaps best visible in the proliferation of the idea of the nation-state. At the same time, in some ways, those ideas and institutions would equalize individual lifestyles and aspirations. The scene in which Ellen invites her savior to her run-down, poor home illustrates this claim. The Tramp had imagined that Ellen's house would be in keeping with the standards expected of the household at the time, that is, equipped with a shiny modern kitchen and boasting a wealth of modern facilities. Yet, as a poor, unemployed, homeless man, Chaplin's protagonist would not fit such a picture. As Sławomir Kaprański observes,

10.1080/14036090701657462; Y. MATRAS: *The Romani Gypsies*. Cambridge, MA 2015), especially chapter 6 "Between Romanticism and Racism." For a comprehensive bibliography on Roma-oriented texts in America, see: W.G. LOCKWOOD, S.M.G. SALO: *Gypsies and Travelers in North America: An Annotated Bibliography*. Cheverly, MD 1994); see also other Gypsy Lore Society publications (<http://www.gypsylloresociety.org/gypsy-lore-society-publications>). Last, but not least, a very interesting collection of texts dedicated to the Roma legacy is also available at the University of Hertfordshire Press website (https://www.herts.ac.uk/search?collection=herts-meta&query=Roma&start_rank=1&sort=relevance). For a more popular approach, see the article by S. DOWD: "On the Road. Siobhan Dowd on the new European Romani Library and Gypsies in Literature." *The Guardian International Edition* 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2002/feb/09/classics>. In the context of the Polish scholarship see, for instance: O. KOLBERG: *Chełmskie*. Reprint. Kraków 1890; J. KRZYŻANOWSKI: *Polska bajka ludowa w układzie systematycznym*. Wrocław 1963; A. SOBIESKA: *Dzieci Hagar. Literackie wizerunki Romów/Cyganów. Studia imagologiczne*. Warszawa 2015.

⁷ S. LINDE: *Słownik języka polskiego*. Vols 1–6. Warszawa 1807–1814. For further information on the stereotypes of the Roma people in the Polish language, see: R. DŹWIGOŁ: "Stereotyp Cygana w języku polskim." In: P. BOREK (ed.): *Romowie w Polsce i Europie*. Kraków 2007, pp. 9–23. Moreover, a direct echo of the historically generated imagery of the Roma people reverberates in everyday English, in which phrases such as "Gypsy run," "Gypsy cab driver," "gypso trucker," and many other fixed collocations involving the lexeme "Gypsy" almost universally denote the "lawlessness" of an illicit or, at best, shady activity that is sometimes colored with the Romantic undertone of "impermanence," "improvisation," "travel," or "movement." Interestingly, the "Gypsy moth" (*Lymantria dispar*) is a European moth attacking shade trees, introduced to North America; the Latin word *Lymantria* denotes "a destroyer."

In the modern era, the Roma began to be treated as people undermining the values of modern culture by virtue of their very existence, as people “in-between” established social structures, beyond the official history (documenting the achievements of the rulers of the emerging nation states and the advancements of the civilization process) and outside the official (script-based) culture, and outside the economic and legal order. [...] In a sense, to the Roma, modernization was tantamount to the transition from being “in-between” to dwelling “outside,” from liminality to marginalization.⁸

Reasons why the Tramp should be excluded from the society have always been easy to find: most frequently, such a rationale would involve the loss of work or eviction from home. The Roma have been “suspect” since the times immemorial. Even if it would hardly be legitimate to put a direct equation mark between the Tramp and the Roma, it leaves no doubt that Chaplin’s films did universalize the Romani experience. They warned the audiences that in the times of crisis anyone may find himself or herself in the position of a pauper. And in such a situation, everyone will need to develop an altogether new skill-set and a new system of values in order to survive.

According to Arendt, the Chaplinian Tramp “represented the revival of a quality long thought to have been killed by a century of class conflict, namely, the entrancing charm of the little people.”⁹ However, when we realize that the “little people” could be the Roma, we may suspect that the “charm” is an echo of a stereotype formed somewhat later than the one emphasizing laziness, an echo of the sentimental and romantic stereotype of “the Gypsy.” Indeed, these were chiefly the writings of the Romantic era that gave rise to the operetta-like, mawkish image of the Roma, constructed as free wanderers living in music, nourished by the love of nature, and paying no heed to worldly riches – impecunious, yet proud and happy. Still, as Arendt observes, carrying the burden of the experience of the Great Depression and faced with the outbreak of the World War, the Chaplinian hero “knew he had been caught by a fate which no amount of cunning and smartness could evade. [...] Men had stopped seeking release in laughter; the little man had decided to be a big one. [...] Today it is not Chaplin, but Superman.”¹⁰

The Chaplinian portrait of the suspect has proven to be prophetic: “In the eyes of the society, the type which Chaplin portrays is always fundamentally suspect. He may be at odds with the world in a thousand and one ways, and his conflicts with it may assume a manifold variety of forms, but always and

⁸ S. KAPRAŁSKI: *Naród z popiołów. Pamięć Zagłady a tożsamość Romów*. Warszawa 2012, pp. 110–114. Unless marked otherwise, all quotations from sources originally written in languages other than English have been translated by Paweł Jędrzejko.

⁹ H. ARENDT: “The Jew as Pariah...,” p. 111.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 326.

everywhere he is under suspicion, so that it is no good arguing rights or wrongs [...]”¹¹ as, Arendt adds, “[t]here is obviously no connection at all between what Chaplin does or does not do and the punishment which overtakes him. Because he is suspect, he is called upon to bear the brunt of much that he has not done.”¹² In the context of her essay, one could argue that the suspect is subjected to the rules of investigation. Constantly watched, spied on, or kept under surveillance, the pariah becomes hyper-visible. For ages, the Roma pariahs, construed as a criminogenic element of the society, have been immersed in the “ecology of fear,”¹³ as they could be accused of child abduction, theft, or swindle at any time. To comprehend the profundity of the relation between Chaplin’s portrayal of the suspect and the Roma pariah, it is enough to scan through the legal acts concerning the Roma people across the ages. As documents demonstrate, on numerous occasions the “suspicion” surprisingly easily transmogrified into “prevention,” which frequently took most radical forms. A thus oriented study of existing legal sources was carried out by Ian Hancock, who was the first to directly shed light upon the figure of the Roma pariah.

Hancock describes the bias typical of the attitudes that the non-Roma societies historically developed with respect to the Roma people, both in North America and in Europe.¹⁴ He also indicates the sources of *anti-Gypsyism* in the historical context, relating such prejudice to the former status of the Roma as a slave nation.¹⁵ Admittedly, only very few academic studies have been dedicated to the history of more than five hundred years of the Roma slavery in the territories of Moldova and Wallachia. The fact has simply never made it to the pages of widespread general histories, nor has it become an object of humanistic, philosophical, or ethical reflection. The above notwithstanding, in reality, the slavery

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 324.

¹² Ibidem, p. 325.

¹³ See M. SELTZER: *True Crime. Observations on Violence and Modernity*. New York 2007 (2011), p. 151.

¹⁴ In early modern Europe, one could consider the “Black Wednesday” of July 20th, 1749, when king Felipe V of Spain ordered the capture of the Roma people, to be emblematic of the general attitude towards the nation. The execution of the royal decree turned into a slaughter. According to historians’ estimates, between 9,000 and 12,000 people of Romani origin were murdered that day. Cf.: “On 30 July 1749 a unique and painful event took place in Spain, known as ‘Black Wednesday’ or ‘the public herding.’ On this day more than 10,000 Roma were forcibly removed and thousands expelled, sentenced to forced labour, injured or killed.” *Our Romani History*, <http://www.varromskahistoria.se/en/forced-integration/black-wednesday> [accessed 18.04.2020]. For a more detailed account, see: L. MRÓZ: *Geneza Cyganów i ich kultury*. Warszawa 1992, pp. 168–197 (in Polish).

¹⁵ I. HANCOCK: *The Pariah Syndrome: An Account of Gypsy Slavery and Persecution*. Revised ed. Ann Arbor 1987, p. 17 et passim. See also: I. HANCOCK: “The Roots of Antigypsyism: To the Holocaust and after.” In: G.J. COLIJN, M. SACHS LITTELL (eds.): *Confronting the Holocaust: A Mandate for the 21st Century*. Lanham 1997, pp. 19–49, https://radoc.net/radoc.php?doc=art_b_history_rootsofprejudice&lang=es&articles=true [accessed 21.04.2020].

of the Roma lasted two hundred years longer than the transatlantic slave trade operations run by the Europeans. It is a fact well noted in historiography, though a fact never publicized, and therefore also generally unacknowledged and largely disremembered.¹⁶ Recognizing this fact, the author of *The Pariah Syndrome: An Account of Gypsy Slavery and Persecution* discusses this issue in detail in the opening chapters of his book. The earliest mentions of the Roma slavery in the Balkans come from the years 1333–1355, and from then onwards it is possible to trace and study the evolution of legal regulations related to this phenomenon. Hancock mentions that

[t]hroughout the Balkan principalities, Gypsies were distributed in the following way: the overall population was divided into house slaves (*tsigani de casatsi*) and field slaves (*tsigani de ogor*). The former were divided further into three categories of Slaves of the Crown or State, namely the *sclavi domneshti* (noblemen), *sclavi curte* (court) and *sclavi gospod* (householders), and one category of Slaves of the Church (*sclavi monastiveshti*).¹⁷

In this context, Hancock meticulously analyzes legal acts issued since 1355 and tracks down references to the Roma made by the authors of extant chronicles. Among other problems, the historical accounts allow one to realize the scale of the Roma slavery. One of such documents describes a major slave auction held in 1834, when the Wallachian *hospodar*,¹⁸ prince Barbu Știrbey decided to renovate his palace and, to cut his overall costs, sold three thousand of his Roma slaves in the course of a single day. Such an immense transaction attracted the attention of the public opinion, spurring a considerable outrage of the progressive milieus. Among others, Hancock quotes an interesting statement by Mihail Kogălniceanu (later the prime minister of Romania), who, in 1837, wrote thus: “The Europeans are organizing philanthropical societies for the abolition of slavery in America, yet in the bosom of their own continent of Europe, there are 400,000 Gypsies who are slaves, and 200,000 more equally victim to barbarousness.”¹⁹ The Spring of

¹⁶ Cf.: *Istoria (ne)cunoscută a sclaviei romilor – The (un)known history of Roma slavery*, a project carried out by the activists in Romania (2019). The authors carry out a street poll demonstrating that even in Romania the Roma slavery is a forgotten, or repressed, part of history. Available online at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FL8fO5xyf2U&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1oNwWRgEg7XjpBhG5GLm7K8vc_3NLarQMOCMW1VIRapDU7DzxnuJEr0Os [accessed 8.04.2019].

¹⁷ I. HANCOCK: *The Pariah Syndrome...*, p. 17.

¹⁸ Prince Barbu Alexandru Știrbey was the 30th prime minister of the Kingdom of Romania in 1927.

¹⁹ “[Les Européens] forment des sociétés philanthropiques pour l’abolition de l’esclavage en Amérique, tandis qu’au sein de leur continent en Europe, il y a quatre cent mille Cigains qui sont esclaves, et deux cent mille autres qui sont couverts des ténèbres de l’ignorance et de la barbarie!” M. KOGĂLNICEANU: *Esquisse sur l’histoire, les mœurs et la langue des Cigains*. Berlin 1837, p. IV, quoted in: I. HANCOCK: *The Pariah Syndrome...*, p. 30.

Nations (Revolutions of 1848) weighed significantly to the abolition of the Roma slavery in the territory of present-day Romania and accelerated the abolition of serfdom in many other countries. In Moldova, slavery was abolished in 1855 and in Muntenia it came to an end in 1856.

In the analytical chapters of his book, Ian Hancock investigates the anti-Roma legislation in various regions of Europe and in North America, beginning with the first known legal acts, continuing with the Nuremberg Race Laws (*Nürnberger Rassegesetze* of 1935), and finishing with the laws that came into force in the 1980s. His analysis allows him to demonstrate that, in practice, the abolition of slavery did not change the overall popular attitude towards the Roma, nor did it significantly improve their situation.²⁰ In many countries the Roma would still be murdered, imprisoned, exploited in forced labor, or made stateless. Often, they would be deported from Europe to North America. Furthermore, Hancock argues that before the abolition of slavery, the Roma slaves, as “human cattle,” may have been safer than the Roma in other regions of Europe of the same period, where, as non-slaves, they would be stigmatized by having their noses or ears cut off, or by being branded with hot irons – or in countries where their killing was legalized resulting, as in Germany, in the so-called “heathen hunts” (*Heidenjachten*), in the course of which the Roma would be hunted like wild game.²¹ One needs to remember that even as late as “in 1826, Freiherr von Lenchen displayed [...] the severed heads of a Gypsy woman and her child,” and in 1835, “a Rheinisch aristocrat entered into his list of kills ‘A Gypsy woman and her suckling babe’” as his hunting trophies.²²

Notwithstanding the 19th-century legislation authorizing the dehumanization of the Roma, Hannah Arendt’s general claim that the pariahs were the quintessential suspects finds a confirmation in Ian Hancock’s work. Hancock demonstrates that throughout centuries it was particularly against the Roma pariahs that special preventive measures would be implemented. Consequently, after the abolition of slavery, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, movements of large Roma groups could not escape the attention of the authorities of particular countries.²³ Since the foundation of the German Empire in 1871,

²⁰ It should be noted that Hancock – writing the history of the Roma only as a history of persecution – was also criticized for essentialism, reductionism, and oversimplification. The history of the interaction between the Roma and the non-Roma is much more complex than his rendition of it. However, I consider the history of prevention as an excellent illustration of the attitudes developed towards the Roma pariahs as suspects.

²¹ See, for instance, J.-P. LIÉGEAIS: *Roma, Gypsies, Travellers*. Trans. S. NÍ SHUINÉAR. Strasbourg 1994, p. 128.

²² I. HANCOCK: *The Pariah Syndrome...*, p. 51; see also the original source: K. BERCOVICI: *The Story of the Gypsies*. London 1930, p. 197, quoted in: K.-M. BOGDAL: *Europa erfindet die Zigeuner: Eine Geschichte von Faszination und Verachtung*. Berlin 2011, p. 59.

²³ I provide the information concerning the history of the Roma people before the Holocaust on the basis of the following sources: A. FRASER: *The Gypsies*. 2nd ed. Oxford, UK–Cambridge, USA 1995; S. KAPRALSKI: *Naród z popiołów...*

at the wish of the chancellor Otto von Bismarck, the authorities of the new nation state attempted to institutionalize the distinction between the “domestic Gypsies” and the “foreign Gypsies” (holders of the German citizenship vs alien migrants).²⁴ In 1899, a new directive on “Combating Gypsy Nuisance” (*Bekämpfung Zigeunerunwesens*)²⁵ was issued, and the Bavarian Police Intelligence Agency for the Gypsies (*Nachrichtendienst für die Sicherheitspolizei in Bezug auf Zigeuner*) was called into existence in Munich. In 1905, *The Gypsy Register* (*Zigeuner-Buch*), listing 3,500 individuals of Romani descent, was compiled.²⁶ In 1906, as many as nine bilateral agreements regulating the Roma presence in Europe were signed between Germany and Austro-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, Russia, and Switzerland.²⁷

In turn, in the years 1915–1919, the French military authorities would incarcerate the Roma and Sinti families in concentration camps, such as the one established in the Capuchin monastery in Crest.²⁸ It is worth noting that, in the interwar period, camps to intern “Gypsies and Beggars” (*Bettler- und Zigeunerlager*) were also established in Bavaria, Switzerland, and Austria.²⁹ Such an unprecedented emergence of the whole network of concentration camps for the Roma calls for a more detailed scrutiny. According to Achille Mbembe, the reason why the figure of the concentration camp has attained a significance of such magnitude in the contemporary western imaginarius is that no other, parallel, modern form of extermination (colonialism, slavery, legal violence with respect to others, symbolic violence) was as overt or has gained as much visibility as has Auschwitz, especially in the context of the transformations observed in the interwar period³⁰:

The revelation of the Great War was, [...] on the one hand, that “primitive conditions can always be reconstructed,” the primitive psyche being, “in the strictest sense, indestructible” [...]. On the other hand, if the death drive, or

²⁴ A. FRASER: *The Gypsies...*, pp. 249–250. See also: S. WOLFE: *The Politics of Reparations and Apologies*. New York–Heidelberg–Dordrecht–London 2014, pp. 88–91.

²⁵ Depending on the source, the compound *Zigeunerunwesens* is translated either as “Gypsy Menace” or “Gypsy Nuisance.” In this article, the version proposed by Agnus Fraser has been adopted.

²⁶ A. DILLMAN: *Zigeuner-Buch, zum amtlichen Gebrauche im Auftrage des K. B. Staatsministeriums des Innern*. München 1905, <https://archive.org/details/zigeunerbuch01dill/page/n1/mode/2up> [accessed 21.04.2020].

²⁷ A. FRASER: *The Gypsies...*, p. 250.

²⁸ G. BAUMGARTNER: “The Process of Exclusion and Persecution of Roma and Sinti in the 1930s and 1940s.” In: *The Roma between the Past and Future. Reflections upon Genocide, Recognition and the Resurgence of Extremism and Anti-Gypsyism. Report on Conference*. De Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, International Gypsy Festival, May 6th, 2012, p. 11, <http://www.requiemforauschwitz.eu/images/pdfs/Conference.pdf> [accessed 1.05.2020].

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ A. MBEMBE: *Necropolitics*. Trans. S. CORCORAN. Durham–London, pp. 15–31, 60.

drive for destruction, can in large part be diverted toward the outside or directed at the objects of the outside world, many other parts of this same drive can always escape the taming process (the very aim of the civilizing endeavor). Further still, the drive to destruction (with all the sadistic and masochistic behavior it involves), once turned toward the outside or projected, can be turned anew toward the inside or introjected. [...] This drive begins by taking the internal Other as a target. [...] From a strictly historical viewpoint, the camp-form emerged on the cusp of the twentieth century (between 1896 and 1907) [...]. Concentration camp logic thus existed well before its systematization and radicalization under the Third Reich. [...] The Third Reich added a crucial dimension to [the] models of colonial origin: the planning of mass death.³¹

Mbembe, primarily, addresses the problem of the concentration camps located outside of Europe, but in the case of the Roma it is possible to talk about the overlooked intra-European colonialism (exploitation, body management, and death management of the Other). It is in this context, as Ethel Brooks suggests, that also the Roma encampment, so happily portrayed by the 19th-century European artists, should be interpreted. Brooks sketches a network of connections between the Roma encampments and slave barracks, galleys, concentration “camps” death camps, and contemporary migrant detention centers.³² Doomed to living in these Roma encampments (not unlike in Jewish ghettos), and thereby spatially isolated, were the people who had not been accepted among the domestic population. Brooks understands the figure of the “camp” similarly to how Achille Mbembe or Michel Agier conceive of it: as a human landfill, a place which allows us to keep all that we find undesirable away from “us,” out of “our” sight.³³ The dump serves the purpose of rendering the Others invisible. In this context, Agier writes about the “Remnants,” who stay beyond the reach of our sight, our conscience, or our care. The world of “human Remnants” has always been construed in opposition to “ours”: as “dark, diseased and invisible.”³⁴ The hyper-visible suspect Roma proved to be so disturbing to the modernist societies and emerging nation states that they would eventually be ousted into the other extreme: spatially isolated, they gradually ended up relegated into invisibility. Yet, as Zygmunt Bauman observes, “[...] the line separating the ‘redundant’ from criminals [is tenuous at best]: the ‘underclass’ and ‘criminals’ are but two subcategories of ‘anti-social elements,’ differing from each other more by the official classification

³¹ Ibidem, pp. 121–125.

³² E. BROOKS: “Reclaiming: The Camp and the Avant-Garde.” In: D. BAKER, M. HLAVAJOVA (eds.): *We Roma: A Critical Reader in Contemporary Art*. Utrecht 2012, pp. 114–138.

³³ M. AGIER (ed.): *Un monde de camps*. Paris 2014, p. 11; see also A. MBEMBE: *Necropolitics...*, pp. 60, 103.

³⁴ M. AGIER: *Managing the Undesirables*. Trans. D. FERNBACH. Cambridge 2011, pp. 1–4.

and the treatment they receive than by their own stance and conduct.”³⁵ It was already at the beginning of the 20th century that the camps established for the Roma pariahs blurred this line and, effectively, invalidated it. Without trial, the suspects would become prisoners and convicts. Registers criminalizing “the Gypsies,” along with quasi-scientific studies carried out to legitimize such documents, both stemmed from and perpetuated the image of the Roma people ingrained in the popular culture, which, by and large, may be held responsible for the formation and naturalization of the (later commonly shared) belief about the alienness and the non-domestication/non-assimilation of the Roma. Events that followed may be considered a prologue to the Porajmos to come, or, arguably, its initial stage. As Gerhard Baumgartner observes: “Summing up, we can say that everybody who became registered as a ‘Gypsy’ during the Interwar Years by the police or by local administrators later ended up on a deportation train towards a Nazi concentration camp.”³⁶

The background of the extermination of the Roma people in the Third Reich was racial in character. Michael Zimmermann observes that

The program of the biological extermination of the Gypsies operationalized by the Hitlerites on racial premises departed from the earlier policies adopted by the Germans with respect to this group. Two opposite trends underlying these policies, of which one was based on the principle of the forced settlement of the Roma while the other aimed at driving them off, found a common solution in a murderous formula, so typical of the Nazi regime. The Gypsies would be killed in a “single” location, in which exile and settlement would forever blend into one.³⁷

Like in the case of the Jewish population, also in the case of the Roma, it was the *Nürnberger Rassengesetze*, the race statutes issued in Nuremberg and passed by the German Reichstag on September 15th, 1935, that provided the legal ground for persecution. The gloss to the statutes describes the Roma as *Fremdrasse*, thereby recognizing the “racial foreignness” of the Roma on par with that of the Jews, as a result of which the Roma were either rendered ineligible to obtain German civil and political rights, or were disenfranchised altogether. Soon thereafter, the deportations of the Roma to the German concentration camps would commence: the Roma were among the first inmates of the KL Dachau, and it was specifically with the view to the elimination of the Roma population that

³⁵ Z. BAUMAN: *Europe. An Unfinished Adventure*. Cambridge 2004, p. 101.

³⁶ G. BAUMGARTNER: “The Process of Exclusion...,” p. 7.

³⁷ M. ZIMMERMANN: *Verfolgt, vertrieben, vernichtet, Die nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik gegen Sinti und Roma*. Essen 1989, p. 142; Translated from Polish on the basis of: J. DĘBSKI, J. TALEWICZ-KWIATKOWSKA: *Prześladowania i masowa zagłada Romów podczas II wojny światowej w świetle relacji i wspomnień*. Kraków 2008, p. 11.

a network of “Gypsy camps” was instituted. The first *Zigeunerlager* was established in 1935 in Köln; the second one was created in 1936, when the Roma and Sinti families from Berlin were forced to relocate to the *Zigeunerlager Marzahn* concentration camp before the official opening of the Olympic games. From 1937, the resolution to the “Gypsy Question” (*Zigeunerfrage*) was the responsibility of the Racial Hygiene and Demographic Biology Research Unit (*Rassenhygienische und Bevölkerungsbiologische Forschungsstelle*), that is, the L3 Department, led by Dr Robert Ritter³⁸ and Eva Justin. Their “research” resulted in the conclusion that the Roma are a threat to the purity of race and ought to be eliminated. From 1937, the Roma would be brought to trials before the Hereditary Health Courts (*die Erbgesundheitsgerichte*) as posing potential hazard of the “bastardization of the race.”³⁹ As a result, a significant number of people of Romani descent were subjected to forced sterilization, which practice was advanced throughout the duration of the Second World War.⁴⁰

In August 1937, Georg Nawrocki, one of the NSDAP spokesmen in Germany, wrote an editorial for *Hamburger Tageblatt*, in which he stated the following:

It was in keeping with the inner weakness and mendacity of the Weimar Republic that it showed no instinct for tackling the Gypsy question. For it, the Sinti were a criminal concern at best – we, on the other hand, see the Gypsy question above all as a racial problem, which must be solved, and which is being solved.⁴¹

³⁸ It was Robert Ritter to develop the “scientific” system for the purpose of the identification of people born into mixed German-Romani or Jewish-Romani marriages; in his “scientific” works, he sought to substantiate the thesis that people of even partial Romani origin were completely pathological, criminogenic, and mentally retarded. He postulated that they be included in the T4 action (*e-aktion*) as individuals whose lives were “unworthy of life” (*lebensunwertes Leben*). Eva Justin was Ritter’s assistant.

³⁹ The reasons for the sterilization of the Roma emphasized by its advocates varied widely. The fact that some of the Roma would draw unemployment benefits or, for instance, were illiterate, sufficed to make them suspects – and, by extension, potential criminals. As such, they would be sterilized as “genetically asocial,” very much in keeping with the premises underlying Nazi eugenic projects, largely based on the principle of the biologization of social traits ascribed to particular ethnic groups. Furthermore, individuals of part-Romani descent, such as Romani-Germans, would be treated on par with the Arab-German or Afro-German population. As *Zigeunermischlinge*, they would be sterilized on the grounds of the doctrine of the “bastardization of the race,” which obviously shifted the argumentation in favor of sterilization from “social” to unquestionably racial reasons. Also, sterilization procedures would frequently be performed in concentration camps as a component of Nazi medical research programs.

⁴⁰ The total number of Roma subjected to sterilization is estimated at ca. 400,000. See: K. BUKOWSKI: *Sterylizacja ludności romskiej 1943–1945 w Bydgoszczy, Dobiegniewie, Pile i Złotowie*. Szczecinek 2012.

⁴¹ “Es war wegen Aufrechterhaltung der inneren Schwäche und Verlogenheit in der Weimarer Republik, dass sie keinen Instinkt für das Anpacken der Zigeunerfrage gezeigt hat. Für sie waren die Sinti bestenfalls eine kriminelle Angelegenheit – wir andererseits sehen die Zigeunerfrage

In tune with his views were the warnings issued by Tobias Portschy,⁴² the leader and organizer of the local structures of the then illegal Nazi party in Austria: “Germans, if you want to be the gravediggers of Nordic blood in Burgenland, you only have to neglect the danger that the Gypsies pose.”⁴³ The Roma endeavored to protest against such a policy. In the face of the lack of any political institutions of their own, they made attempts to put up a fight resorting to available methods. For instance, protesting the denial of civil rights, in his letter of May 12th, 1938, addressed to the government of the Reich, Franz Horvath demanded the restoration of the right-to-work laws for the Roma to warrant dignified living conditions to the Roma families. In his letter, Horvath argued thus:

Many men from among us Roma were in the Great War and fought for our fatherland just as bravely as others, but Dr Portschy has failed to acknowledge this. He speaks and writes that the Roma should not be given anything, no work, and we shouldn't be entitled to anything else. That's why I have decided without further ado to contact the supreme Reich government.⁴⁴

als Rassenproblem, dass gelöst werden muss und dass gelöst worden ist.” G. NAWROCKI: “Cintis in Hamburg: Grossstadt-Zigeuner Ohne Romantik.” *Hamburger Tagblatt* 1937 (18–20 Aug.), pp. 223–225, <http://www.minderheiten.org/roma/index2.html>; <http://www.minderheiten.org/roma/ueberblick/2.2.timeline.htm> [accessed 21.04.2020]. The source of the English translation: I. HANCOCK: “The Roots of Antigypsyism...”

⁴² Tobias Portschy (1905–1996) was a member of the Austrian National Socialist movement. After the annexation of Austria, he served as deputy governor of Styria and joined the SS. He was a fierce anti-Gypsyist: in his 1938 study *Die Zigeunerfrage* (*The Roma Question*), he called for the Roma to be deprived of all civil rights, including the right to attend school, and appealed for their sterilization and deportation to labor camps. He was the chief architect of the Roma extermination in Austria.

⁴³ “Willst du, Deutscher, Totengräber des Nordischen Blutes im Burgenlande werden, so übersehe nur die Gefahr, die ihm die Zigeuner sind!” T. PORTSCHY: [Denkschrift zur „Zigeunerfrage“ vom August 1938], Eisenstadt, August 1938, title page, http://www.kurt-bauer-geschichte.at/PDF_Lehrveranstaltung%202008_2009/E11_Portschy_Zigeunerfrage.pdf [accessed 22.04.2020]. See also: A. MAYER-BENEDEK: *Schicksal der Burgenlandroma mit Blick auf Mattersburg*, p. 5, <http://www.70haus.at/buch/roma/roma.pdf> [accessed 21.04.2020]. The quotation in English comes from: G. BAUMGARTNER: “Austrian Roma under the Holocaust and the Problems of Restitution.” In: *Holocaust Era Assets: Conference Proceedings. Prague, June 26–30, 2009*. Prague 2009, p. 422, https://www.lootedart.com/web_images/pdf2018/1.1.4%20Holocaust_Era_Assets_Conference_Proceedings_2009.pdf [accessed 24.04.2020].

⁴⁴ “Viele Männer von uns Zigeunern waren im Weltkrieg und kämpften fürs Vaterland so gut wie andere, doch das hat Dr. Portschy nicht gewürdigt. Er spricht und schreibt, man solle den Zigeunern nichts geben, keine Arbeit, und solle auch keine sonstigen Ansprüche zulassen. Daher habe ich mich kurz entschlossen, die hohe Reichsregierung anzurufen.” F. HORVATH: [letter “Daher habe ich mich kurz entschlossen, die hohe Reichsregierung anzurufen,”] Self-evidence, German Reich (Ostmark), May 12, 1938, voi_00023. Rights held by Franz Horvath. Provided by Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (Vienna/Austria) Archived under: 12.543, <https://www.romarchive.eu/en/collection/daheer-habe-ich-mich-kurz-entschlossen-die-hohe-reichsregierung-anzurufen/> [accessed 22.04.2020]. Contextualization by Gerhard Baumgartner (2017). See

At the same time, Ferdinand Klein, a Yenish door-to-door salesman and basket maker from Gießen, decided to take legal steps. "In 1938, he won a district court case on his motion in which he stood against a wrongful arrest of 'independent Gypsy traders.' The problem was that they were arrested based on the right to regulate problems with anti-social individuals, but Klein managed to present the senselessness of this reasoning."⁴⁵ The only laws that the Roma could hope to invoke in their defense at the time were those related to the civil rights, which, in fact, they had already been denied. Their fate was thus sealed.

In the course of the Second World War, about 50% of the pre-war Roma population of Europe lost their lives. Edward Dębicki, the author of a memoir of the Roma genocide, stated that he represented "a generation whose families would namelessly perish in almost every place: on roads, in forests, in villages, and in concentration camps."⁴⁶ Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska points out that the reason why the adequate assessment of the number of victims of the Porajmos is problematic is the fact that executions were routinely perpetrated outside of camps. After all, the Roma died where the persecutors captured them: when rounded up, whole Roma caravans would be murdered, their bodies buried in nearby woods.⁴⁷

The Roma became the victims of the "holocaust by bullets"⁴⁸ in Ukraine, where almost the whole pre-war Romani population was annihilated.⁴⁹ They would be killed in the same locations as would the Jews, oftentimes sharing the same mass graves. It was also in Ukraine that 25,000 Romani deportees from Romania died of hunger. Like the Jews, also the Roma would be confined to ghettos. Sometimes, like in the case of the Litzmannstadt (Łódź) Ghetto, both

also: International Romani Resistance Day, <http://2august.eu/the-roma-genocide/16-may-romani-resistance-day/> as well as <http://www.sintiundroma.de/en/sinti-roma/the-national-socialist-genocide-of-the-sinti-and-roma/extermination/resistance.html> [accessed 30.05.2018].

⁴⁵ "Gießen (Stolperstein Klein)." *Na Bister*, <http://muzeum.tarnow.pl/na-bister/en/giesen-stolperstein-klein-2/> [accessed: 05.08.2018]. See also: "Mühlstraße 8 (ehem. Löwengasse 23) – Ferdinand Klein." *Gießen Rathaus*, <https://www.giessen.de/index.php?ModID=7&FID=2874.1345.1&object=tx%7C2874.1345.1> [accessed 21.05.2018].

⁴⁶ E. DĘBICKI: [A statement]. *Kwartalnik Romski* 2012, vol. 7/2, p. 4.

⁴⁷ J. TALEWICZ-KWIATKOWSKA: "Holokaust Romów. Czy rzeczywiście zapomniany?" *Nigdy Więcej* 2016, no. 22.

⁴⁸ The phrase "Holocaust by bullets" has been introduced by Father Patrick Desbois. See: P. DESBOIS: "The Holocaust by Bullets," <https://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/docs/pdf/chapter7.pdf> [accessed 22.05.2020].

⁴⁹ "When at the end of the 1990s the French clergyman Patrick Desbois set off for Ukraine to look for mass graves of the Jews shot by the Nazis and to record the memories of witnesses, it turned out that he was the first person whom villagers could tell about the Holocaust, because no one had ever asked them questions about it before." Quoted in: A. PORTNOW: "Czy Ukraina jest gotowa wyorośleć? Spostrzeżenia na temat Holokaustu w polityce i pamięci historycznej." In: *Światła w Ciemności – Sprawiedliwi wśród Narodów Świata*. Lublin 2010, <http://doczz.pl/doc/113318/praca-z-z-e2%80%9Etrudn%C4%85pami%C4%99ci%C4%85E2%80%9D-w-spo%C5%82eczno%C5%9Bciach> [accessed 25.02.2018].

groups would share the same space. Often, however, the Roma would be isolated in separate ghettos, ones demarcated solely for them, such as those established by the Arrow Cross Party in Hungary. The Roma would die in all types of camps devised during the Second World War: extermination camps, concentration camps, and labor camps. Special concentration camps, in which solely the Roma would be imprisoned, were created; as a rule, after some time, the prisoners of these camps would be relocated to extermination camps, such as: Köln-Bickendorf, Berlin-Marzahn, Magdeburg-Holzweg, Preetzer Straße-Kiel, Ravensburg, Lackenbach,⁵⁰ Lety, Hodonín, Dubnica on Vah, Poitiers, Rennes, La Forge de Moisdon-la-Riviere, Jargeau, Coudrecieux, Choisel Linas-Monthéry, Mulsanne, Arc-et-Senans, Saint-Maurice-aux-Riches-Hommes, Les Alliers, or Montreuil-Bellay. The Roma prisoners would also be deported to death camps established for the purpose of the extermination of prisoners representing a variety of nations. For instance, in the Jasenovac camp alone, which the Romani inmates shared with Jews, Serbs, and other nations, the Ustaše exterminated nearly the whole population of the Croatian Roma. In Romania, the cleansing of the country of the “Gypsy element” was effected by means of deportations of the Roma population to Transnistria.⁵¹ In Bulgaria, the Roma would be exploited for forced labor, and as such were deployed to perform a variety of tasks related to public construction projects, such as roadbuilding. Discussing the forced labor of Jewish and Roma deportees, Enzo Traverso puts it in a global perspective, explaining that “as in slavery, the alienation of the workers was total. Unlike in classical slavery, however, the deportees did not constitute a labor force that was intended to reproduce itself but was supposed to be worked to exhaustion and death within the framework of a system of veritable *extermination through work*.”⁵² The extermination of the Roma was perpetrated as a result of a combination of an unprecedented attempt to murder the entire ethnos (which was characteristic of the Second World War genocides in general), and colonial violence (manifest in the attempts to place the Roma in a “human zoo,” to exploit the enslaved bodies in a variety of forms of forced physical labor, or to physically use the non-citizens as cannon fodder in military conflicts).

Legal steps, concordant with binding laws and ordinances, were taken against the Roma pariahs. These actions, however, were not reflected in the public rhetoric of the authorities due to an internal dispute concerning the extermination of the Roma people, which was soon to be put in effect. Heinrich Himmler’s 1938 directive *Bekämpfung der Zigeunerplage*⁵³ (*Fighting the Gypsy Plague*) stated that

⁵⁰ M. POLLACK: “Nie ma tablicy pamiątkowej dla Romów. Pamięć i milczenie w Burgenlandzie.” *Studia Romologica* 2012, no. 5, pp. 243–251.

⁵¹ Today, the village is located in the Sambir District, Ukraine.

⁵² E. TRAVERSO: *The Origins of Nazi Violence*. Trans. J. LLOYD. New York-London, pp. 33–34.

⁵³ See: Runderlaß des Reichsführers SS und Chefs der Deutschen Polizei im Reichsministerium des Inneren, Heinrich Himmler, von 8.12.1938 über die “Bekämpfung der Zigeunerplage.”

the “mixed-blood” Roma were the most criminogenic group within the Romani population,⁵⁴ and emphasized the need for the police to forward all statistics and other information on the Roma collected over the years directly to the Central Bureau for the Fight Against the Gypsy Nuisance (*Reichszentrale zur Bekämpfung des Zigeunerunwesens*). As a result of this, all individuals defined as “part-Gypsy” (*Zigeunermischling*) were soon to face a much greater danger of annihilation than those classified as “pure-blood” (*rassereinen Zigeunern*). According to a theory advanced by Hans F.K. Günther, the “pure-blood” Roma were to be the descendants of the Aryans representing lower classes, whose members would mix with other, “inferior,” peoples, such as Turks, Semites, or Dravidians.⁵⁵ Robert Ritter suggested that between 5 and 10% of the “pure-bloods,” that is, the wandering and non-assimilated Roma, possessing the traits of the ancient Aryans, should be preserved. Also Heinrich Himmler wanted to keep a small Roma population, which could be considered an example of an early Indo-Germanic community, intact for research purposes; he was even prepared to warrant its members some freedom of movement.⁵⁶ Himmler was also the originator of the idea of establishing a Roma reservation (emulating the North American concept of an Indian reservation), reminiscent of a “human zoo.” He never brought these plans into effect, because “Martin Bormann told him firmly that ‘the Fuhrer would not countenance giving back their old freedoms to one section of the Gypsies,’ and nothing came of any idea of having a Gypsy reservation.”⁵⁷ If, unlike the annihilation of the Jews, the extermination of the Roma did not come to occupy the centerstage of the state ideology of the Third Reich, it happened so not because of the lesser importance of the project, but rather due to the disagreement between the perpetrators as to the principles according to which the Roma question were to be “properly addressed,” particularly: as to whether all of them should be exterminated without distinction, or whether those integrated into the society of the Reich, or those whose “racial traits” indicated Aryan descent, should be saved. As Rudolf Hoess wrote in his memoirs: “[...] the regulations governing their arrest were not drawn up with sufficient precision. Various offices of the Criminal Police interpreted them in different ways, and as a result persons were arrested who could not possibly be

Ministerialblatt des Reichs- und Preußischen Ministeriums des Innern, 1938, Nr. 51, Spalten 2105–2106, https://geschichte-bewusst-sein.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/SNG_014_RZ_Zusatz12-2017-02-23.pdf [accessed 22.05.2020].

⁵⁴ “Erfahrungsgemäß haben die Mischlinge den größten Anteil an der Kriminalität der Zigeuner.” See: Runderlaß des Reichsführers SS...

⁵⁵ For a more extensive insight into Hans F.K. Günther’s theory, see: P. FRIEDMAN: “The Extermination of the Gypsies: Nazi Genocide of an Aryan People.” In: A.J. FRIEDMAN: *Roads to Extinction. Essays on the Holocaust*. New York 1980, pp. 382–383.

⁵⁶ See: S. KAPRALSKI: *Naród z popiołów...*, pp. 153–154. See also: G. TYRNAUER: “Mastering the Past: Germans and Gypsies.” In: F. CHALK, K. JONASSOHN (eds.): *The History and Sociology of Genocide. Analyses and Case Studies*. New Haven–London 1990.

⁵⁷ A. FRASER: *The Gypsies...*, p. 264.

regarded as belonging to the category that it was intended to intern.”⁵⁸ Thus, the fates of the Romani men, women, and children were contingent on the changeable state policy the Third Reich would adopt towards the “mixed-race” Roma and the Romani “pure-bloods,” and on the whims of particular individuals in the positions of power. Hence, next to the fact that the authorities of the Reich did their best to render the Porajmos inconspicuous to the general public, the second major trait of the Roma genocide was its erratic character. It stemmed from the fact that at lower levels of the administration of the Reich the policy tended to be implemented with a far greater zeal than it was the case at the highest, governmental, levels. At the same time, it was a result of the concurrence of a variety of differing interpretations of the directives concerning the Roma, adopted in the occupied and satellite countries. Sybil Milton points out that the majority groups treated the criminal persecution of the Roma as both obvious and natural. The bias was so deeply rooted in the European history and culture that the implementation of the murderous measures did not require any special institutions or staff to enforce it.⁵⁹ Because the mainstream Nazi propaganda never presented an unequivocal position of the Reich’s central administration with respect to the Roma, the decision-making process at lower (local) levels of the organization was characterized by a certain degree of discretion, and therefore was contingent on the choices made by individuals, whose weltanschauungs were often based on profoundly ingrained ethnic or social prejudice. In such a context, the figure of the pariah turns out to be the key to the understanding of the process.

Obscure, immethodical, and perpetrated in the context of zealous public complicity during the war, the *Porajmos* was also systematically passed over in silence when the war came to its end. Even then, the majority groups would continue to treat the Roma as pariahs, thus reinforcing their own, historically molded, position of social distance. In the postwar conditions, the re-incorporation of the Roma minority into larger bodies of citizenship proved not to have come about. As non-citizens and, thereby, as people unprotected by any state, the Roma continued functioning in the limbo of “bare life.”⁶⁰ As Angus Fraser observes, “[t]hose who were liberated from the camps were often left stranded as displaced or stateless

⁵⁸ R. HOESS: *Commandant of Auschwitz. The Autobiography of Rudolf Hoess*. Introduction by LORD RUSSELL OF LIVERPOOL, C.B.E., M.C. Trans. C. FITZGIBBON. Cleveland-New York 1959, p. 138.

⁵⁹ S. MILTON: “Persecuting the Survivors. The Continuity of ‘Anti-Gypsyism’ in Post-war Germany and Austria.” In: S. TEBBUTT (ed.): *Sinti and Roma. Gypsies in German-Speaking Society and Literature*. New York–Oxford 2008, pp. 35–47; S. KAPRALSKI: *Naród z popiołów...*, pp. 192–193.

⁶⁰ See: G. AGAMBEN: *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. D. HELLER-ROAZEN. Stanford 1998; H. ARENDT: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. San Diego–New York–London 1973.

persons, subject to all kinds of red tape and special restrictions.”⁶¹ Their former homelands would either close their borders to the Roma, or refuse to restore their citizenship (German, Austrian, Swedish, etc.). Historians are familiar with a document issued in 1948 by the government of Austria, which overtly warned the local police authorities about the Roma, who would often pass themselves off as former prisoners of concentration camps in order to “make an impression on the population,”⁶² presumably, with the view to gain. It seems that two powerful phrases: *persecuting the survivors*, as used by Sybil Milton,⁶³ and the *living apartheid*, as employed by Alpha Abdikeeva,⁶⁴ adequately apply to the context sketched out above. Stateless, unable to apply for compensations, powerless in their attempts to recover their prewar property, and frequently refused work permits, the Roma would be driven into structural poverty. Following Milton, Abdikeeva describes situations in which, for decades, the Roma families were given no chance to leave the shanties or wagons assigned to them as dwellings upon the return of their surviving family members from the concentration camps. In Germany, the survivors would oftentimes be accommodated in the very same camps that the Nazis had established for them during the war as sites of extermination. Milton observes that “in both Cologne and Düsseldorf, local governments compelled Sinti and Roma survivors to return to the dilapidated housing and marginal sanitation of Nazi municipal Gypsy internment camps and were empowered to evict and prosecute returning survivors and refugees found residing in other unapproved sites regulated by city council.”⁶⁵ The scholar also describes the case of Andreas Kaufmann, a Sinto, whose German citizenship was granted (or, more precisely, restored) only in 1979 – thirty-four years after the war – in spite of the fact that a long time before the official decision was made, he had documented his ancestors’ uninterrupted Bavarian residence of over two hundred years.⁶⁶

⁶¹ A. FRASER: *The Gypsies...*, p. 270.

⁶² See the official document respecting the “Gypsy Nuisance,” issued by the Directorate General for the Public Security of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Austria (Republik Österreich, Bundesministerium für Inneres, Generaldirektion für die Öffentliche Sicherheit) on September 9th, 1948, file: BMI ZI.84-426-4/48 vom 20.9.1948). Reproduced and discussed in E. THURNER: “Roma in Europa, Roma in Österreich.” In: E. THURNER, E. HUSSL, B. EDER-JORDAN (eds.): *Roma und Travellers. Identitäten im Wandel*. Introduction by K.-M. GAUSS. Innsbruck 2015, p. 25, https://www.uibk.ac.at/iup/buch_pdfs/roma-und-travellers/10.152032936-95-0.pdf [accessed 22.05.2020].

⁶³ S. MILTON: “Persecuting the Survivors...”

⁶⁴ A. ABDIKEEVA: *Germany’s Policies toward Sinti and Roma: Living Apartheid?* The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) 2002, <http://www.errc.org/article/germanys-policies-toward-sinti-and-roma-living-apartheid/777> [accessed 15.09.2017]; A. ABDIKEEVA: *Roma Poverty and the Roma National Strategies: The Cases of Albania, Greece and Serbia*. London 2005.

⁶⁵ S. MILTON: “Persecuting the Survivors...,” p. 37.

⁶⁶ Ibidem, p. 39.

After 1945, a view arose that during the war the Roma were not being murdered on racial grounds, but rather as social parasites or “asocials.” Because after the war individual countries passed legal acts on combating social parasitism, this motivation for the extermination of the Roma was quietly accepted, or even sympathized with.⁶⁷ Angus Fraser observes that

[i]f the reason for a Gypsy’s victimization was that he was a possible criminal, and not simply that he was a Gypsy, it could be claimed that his fate was ‘only’ a consequence of ordinary security measures. One line of thought which prevailed for many years in the German courts was that up to late 1942 Gypsies were not being persecuted on racial grounds and that any action taken before then, regardless of whether it was unjustified, merited no compensation. In 1959 the Hamm court of appeal pronounced on the case of a Gypsy, Erik Balasz, who was arrested in Poland in 1940 at the age of 16 and then imprisoned for five years, and whose parents were both murdered: “It is immaterial whether the claimant was at the time to be regarded as asocial or not. The decisive factor is that the criminal police did regard him as asocial, and for that reason took him into protective custody.”⁶⁸

Let us reiterate Hannah Arendt’s observation again: “In the eyes of the society, the type that Chaplin portrays is always fundamentally suspect. [...] Always and everywhere he is under suspicion, so that it is no good arguing rights or wrongs. [...] There is obviously no connection at all between what Chaplin does or does not do and the punishment which overtakes him. Because he is suspect, he is called upon to bear the brunt of much that he has not done.”⁶⁹ The consequences of the above were obvious: as a result of such a policy, Germany was not obliged to disburse any war compensations to the Roma. None of the architects of the Porajmos ever faced charges related to the crimes against the Roma.⁷⁰ These individuals would often continue to work for the public administration, at universities, or practice medicine. In the cases where the Nazi perpetrators who had committed crimes against the Roma did stand trial and were convicted, the facts related to the role they played in the Roma genocide would not have been taken into account. Similarly, in the political narratives of many nations the racial premises of the crime against the Roma were eagerly ignored, while the social pragmatism of the anti-Roma actions would often be emphasized. Thus, the portrait of the suspect, firmly established in the cultural tradition, proved to be an effective tool of historical policy. As Sławomir Kapralski observes, the non-Romani world proved incapable of locating the “people without history” in the center

⁶⁷ In Poland, despite several legislative initiatives in the 1960s and 1970s, a similar law did not eventually enter into force.

⁶⁸ A. FRASER: *The Gypsies...*, pp. 268–269.

⁶⁹ H. ARENDT: “The Jew as Pariah...,” pp. 111–112.

⁷⁰ However, the Roma theme is present in the transcripts of interrogations of Nazi criminals.

of what has come to be recognized as the single most important event in history ever.⁷¹ The scholar does not present the Roma as a people who choose not to speak about their history: he presents them as a group forced into silence, a group whose collective memory was marginalized in yet another act of social exclusion.

The fact that Porajmos could be rendered invisible is a function of the pariah's permanent positioning as an outsider with respect to the legislation in force and as an outcast from the network of binding social norms. Thus, his or her exclusion from the official space of cultural memory does not raise any eyebrows: it is commonly perceived as both obvious and natural. The text of this article was completed on August 2nd, the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day, in 2019. Yet, on that day, not even a passing reference to the Roma genocide was made on any of the Polish television channels and news services. And it is precisely this silence that articulates the point of this text more eloquently than any words ever could.

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⁷¹ S. KAPRALSKI: "Milczenie, pamięć, tożsamość. Fantazmat 'Cygana' i ambiwalencja nowoczesności." *Ethos* 2016, no. 113, pp. 185–202; See also: S. KAPRALSKI: *Naród z popiołów...*, pp. 208, 218.

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Monika Weychert

Zagłada Romów Pariasi romscy przed, podczas i po II wojnie światowej

ABSTRAKT: Max Weber użył terminu parias w poświęconym starożytnemu judaizmowi trzecim tomie dzieła *Etyka gospodarcza religii światowych* na określenie narodu żydowskiego, który – jego zdaniem – miał być „formalnie lub faktycznie odizolowanym od środowiska społecznego obcym ludem przybysz”. Zainspirowana tą Weberowską figurą Hannah Arendt, jako pierwsza, choć nie intencjonalnie, opisała także romskiego pariasa. Odwołując się do tekstu Arendt, można powiedzieć,

że podejrzany parias zostaje poddany regułom śledztwa, badania czy dochodzenia: jest „brany pod lupę”, „prześwietlany”, „patrzy mu się na ręce”. Tym samym staje się hiperwidzialny. Romski parias przez wieki zanurzony był w „ekologii strachu”, w każdej chwili bowiem mógł zostać oskarżony, np. o kradzież czy oszustwo jako społeczny element kryminogenny. Owo podejrzenie niezwykle łatwo przeradzało się też w prewencję, niekiedy o bardzo radykalnych formach. Ian Hancock, w pracy *The Pariah Syndrome: An Account Of Gypsy Slavery And Persecution*, już wprost rzucił światło na figurę Roma-pariasa, analizując antyromskie ustawodawstwo w Europie. Figura pariasa pozwala prześledzić specyfikę Zagłady Romów jako ludobójstwa równoległego do Szoa, lecz o odmiennych przyczynach, przebiegu oraz powojennych konsekwencjach, które przesądziły o jej niepamięci oraz niewidzialności.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: Zagłada Romów, Romowie, parias, niezadomowienie

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